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U.S. Faces A-Arms Gap, Group Warns

By ORR KELLY
Star Staff Writer

A warning of "a massive megatonnage gap" in the power of United States and Russian nuclear weapons by 1971 is contained in a report signed by a number of retired U.S. military leaders.

A megaton equals a million tons of TNT, and the report, issued yesterday by the American Security Council, said Russia is succeeding in a "massive drive toward military superiority" by manufacturing nuclear weapons that are larger in destructive power than those of the United States.

A Defense Department statement, disputing the report, said the "number of weapons and size of warheads allowed are a very incomplete indicator of military strength.

'More Than Enough'

"True military capability results from numbers of weapons that are accurate and reliable, that can survive an enemy attack and that can penetrate every defense. The U. S. has and will continue to have

more than enough such weapons to convince any enemy that an attack on this country would be suicidal."

The ASC report said that in 1962 the United States was capable of delivering between 25,000-50,000 megatons of nuclear explosives compared with only 5,000-10,000 for the Soviet Union.

But by 1971, the report estimated, the situation will have reversed itself almost totally, with a range of 5,000-15,000 for the United States compared with 30,000-50,000 for the Soviet Union.

Schriever a Signer

Pentagon sources said the attempt to measure the gross megatons available to both sides has very little meaning. In fact, they said, the United States has been deliberately moving up the development of smaller—and more accurate—nuclear warheads.

They said, for example, that five one-megaton bombs can wreak as much havoc as one 25-megaton bomb and that, in many cases, five small bombs

accurately placed could do far more damage than one big bomb.

Among those signing the report were Gen. Bernard A. Schriever, who for 12 years headed the intercontinental ballistic missile development program; Gen. Curtis E. LeMay, former Air Force chief of staff; Adm. Robert L. Dennison, former commander of the Atlantic Fleet; Dr. Edward U. Teller, the nuclear scientist who often is referred to as father of the hydrogen bomb; Army Gen. Paul D. Adams, former commander-in-chief of the U.S. Strike Command, and Air Force Gen. Thomas S. Power, former commander of the Strategic Air Command.

The group said it made the report at the request of chairman L. Mendel Rivers, D-S.C., of the House Armed Services Committee.

Financed by Firms

The American Security Council is a private organization financed by a number of business firms. It conducts a nightly radio program and studies in the

area of national security and carries out personal security checks for its member firms. The ASC is frequently grouped with right-wing organizations.

"The available evidence," the report said, "indicates that the Soviet Union has a goal of strategic superiority designed to win a nuclear war rather than merely deter one. . . . The U.S. has exchanged its goal of a war-winning strategic superiority for a strategy of mutual deterrence."

The United States has also lagged, the report said, in the